

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for managing a return of a product, the method comprising:
receiving a return request for the product;
determining whether the return request is authorized;
issuing, from a first management system, a return authorization number (RAN)
for the return request when the return request is determined to be authorized;
creating a record in a second management system for the return request, the
record comprising the RAN; and
updating the record in the second management system after the product has
been returned.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the first management system is a
customer relationship management (CRM) system.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the second management system
comprises at least one of a supply chain management (SCM) management system and
a warehouse management (WM) system.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein the record is a delivery request.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the method further comprises
communicating information between the first and second management systems utilizing
the RAN.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the method further comprises providing a shipping label in response to approving the return request, the shipping label comprising the RAN.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the return request is for a quantity of the product greater than one.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the method further comprises splitting the record in the second management system into a plurality of new records with the RAN when less than all of the quantity is received.

9. A method for managing a product return, the method comprising:
authorizing a request from a customer to return a product;
creating at least one record in each of a plurality of management systems when the request for the product return is authorized;
assigning a unique identifier to the product return;
associating the unique identifier with each record corresponding the product to be returned;
exchanging information regarding the product return between the plurality of management systems utilizing the unique identifier.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the plurality of management systems comprises at least one of a customer relationship management (CRM) system, a supply chain management (SCM) system and a warehouse management (WM) system.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein the plurality of management systems comprises the warehouse management (WM) system.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the plurality of management systems comprises a logistics, execution and shipping (LES) management system.

13. A method for managing a product return, the method comprising:
assigning at least one return authorization number (RAN) to the product return;
creating in a first database a return authorization record for the product return, the return authorization record comprising the RAN;
creating, in a second database, a warehouse record for the product return, the pending delivery record comprising the RAN; and
updating the return authorization and the pending delivery records using the RAN.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the return authorization record comprises a plurality of return authorization items.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein each return authorization item comprises a unique RAN.

16. The method of claim 14, wherein the warehouse record comprises a plurality of pending delivery items, each of the pending delivery items being created for at least one of the return authorization items.

17. The method of claim 13, wherein the second database is a warehouse management (WM) system.

18. The method of claim 13, wherein the return authorization record further comprises a product type and a quantity.

19. The method of claim 13, further comprising creating a shipping label based on the return authorization record and communicating the shipping label to a customer.

20. A method for managing a product return, the method comprising:
indexing a record in a first database for a product return using at least one unique identifier;
creating a record for the product return in a second database, the record in the second database comprising the unique identifier; and
exchanging, between the first and second databases, information related to the product return, wherein each item of exchanged information is identified by the unique identifier.

21. A computer readable medium containing instructions for carrying out a method for managing a product return, the method comprising:
creating a record in a customer relationship management (CRM) system for a product return using at least one return authorization number;
creating a record for the product return in a warehouse management (WM) system using the return authorization number; and
exchanging between the management systems information related to the product return, wherein each item of exchanged information is identified by the return authorization number.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein the record in the CRM system is a return authorization record.

23. The method of claim 21, wherein the record in the WM system is a pending delivery record.

24. A computer readable medium containing instructions for carrying out a method, the method comprising:

assigning a return authorization number (RAN) to an approved product return;
creating in a first database a return authorization record for the approved product return, the return authorization record comprising the RAN;
creating, in a second database, a pending delivery record comprising the RAN;
and
updating the return authorization and the pending delivery records using the RAN.

25. The method of claim 24, wherein the return authorization record comprises a plurality of return authorization items.

26. The method of claim 25, wherein each return authorization item comprises a return authorization number.

27. The method of claim 25, wherein a pending delivery item is created for each return authorization item.

28. The method of claim 24, wherein the second database is a warehouse management database.

29. The method of claim 24, wherein the return authorization record further comprises a product type and a quantity.

30. The method of claim 24, further comprising creating a shipping label based on the return authorization record and communicating the shipping label to a customer.

31. A computer readable medium containing instructions for carrying out a method for managing a product return, the method comprising:

authorizing a request from a customer to return a product;

creating at least one record in each of a plurality of management systems for handling the product return;

assigning a unique identifier to the product return;

associating the unique identifier with each record corresponding to the product to be returned; and

exchanging information regarding the product return between the plurality of management systems utilizing the unique identifier.

32. A system for managing a return of a product, the method comprising:

a first database configured to receive a return request for the product, and to generate a first record comprising a return authorization number (RAN) for the product if the return request is authorized;

a second database, in communication with the first database, configured to create a second record corresponding to the return, the second record comprising the RAN; and

wherein the first and second database are each configured to exchange information regarding the return utilizing the RAN.

33. The system of claim 32, wherein the first record is a return authorization record.

34. The system of claim 33, wherein the return authorization record comprises a plurality of return authorization items, each corresponding to a unique RAN.

35. The system of claim 32, wherein the second record is a pending delivery record.

36. The system of claim 35, wherein the pending delivery comprises a plurality of pending delivery items each corresponding to a return authorization item.

37. The system of claim 32, wherein a quantity of the returned item is greater than one.

38. The system of claim 37, wherein the first database is configured to split the first record when not all of the quantity is returned.

39. The system of claim 37, wherein the second database is configured to split the second record when not all of the quantity is returned.

40. A system for managing a product return, the method comprising:
a computer configured to assign a return authorization number (RAN) to a product return;

a plurality of databases, each configured to receive the RAN and to create at

least one record corresponding to the product return, wherein each record corresponding to the return item is uniquely associated with the RAN.

41. A system for managing a product return, the method comprising:
a first computer comprising a user interface for receiving a return request from a customer, creating a first record comprising a return authorization number (RAN), and transmitting to the customer an authorization for a product return comprising the RAN;
a second computer, in communication with the first computer, configured to receive the RAN, and to create, upon receipt of the return authorization, a record in a database comprising the RAN.

42. The system of claim 41, wherein the user interface comprises a web site.

43. The system of claim 42, wherein a customer submits a return request via the web site.

44. The system of claim 42, wherein the first computer creates a shipping label and transmits the shipping label to a customer via the web site.

45. The system of claim 41, wherein the first and second computers communicate using an EDI.

46. The system of claim 41, wherein the first and second computers communicate using a BAPI.

47. The system of claim 41, wherein the first and second computers communicate using R/3 information objects.